433
434
226 months; less than a dozen crews now fish regularly, and most fish are consumed locally rather than exported. Government subsidies of many
434 sorts and remittances from relatives who have emigrated supplement the
657 cash economy. The government further aids the islanders by not collect-
[651] ing "rates" and by setting low rents on land. Income information is as
12 difficult to come by as data on sex, disputes, and pagan religious retentions; since the people do not wish to jeopardize their unemployment benefits (most of them receive the "dole") and old age pensions and fear taxation in the future, they are secretive about sources and amounts of income.

626 More important than the formal political structure of Inis Beag are the local informal system and social control techniques of gossip,
674 ridicule, satire, and the like. Crime is rare in Inis Beag, and there are no "guards" stationed there. The island is seldom visited by politicians,
829 and many inhabitants are either apathetic or antagonistic toward the
641 county and national governments. Those asked to account for their
[66] antigovernment attitude cite widespread nepotism and corruption among officials, the slight differences between the platforms of the two major parties, and "foolish" government schemes in Inis Beag—usually instituted without consulting the islanders. Government aid is sought and
[657] even expected as a "right," but it is seldom considered adequate. Tax-
[746] ation in any form, especially of tobacco and stout, is bitterly opposed.

626 The informal political system is dominated by the curate, the
793 "headmaster" of the national school, and a self-appointed local "king."
[875] In the past, the amount of influence exerted by curates has varied; some
[624] have been concerned mostly with fulfilling spiritual responsibilities, while others have attacked by sermon, threat, and even physical action such activities as courting, dancing, visiting, gossiping, and drinking
793 spirits. Anticlerical sentiment (seldom manifested in overt acts) is as
829 strong as, or stronger than, its antigovernment counterpart. The clergy are said to interfere too much in secular affairs, to live too "comfortably," to be absent from the island too often, and to act overly aloof and
[626] supercilious. The most outspoken anticlerics assert that curates have employed informers, allocated indulgences, withheld the sacraments, and placed curses ("reading the Bible at") in their efforts to regulate the
875 secular life of Inis Beag. The headmaster, appointed and rigidly super-
571 vised by the parish priest and curate, presides over social events and serves as an adviser to the islanders in many matters, in addition to carrying out his official duties.

571 Inis Beag lacks a class system, and the status symbols which affect